

## REVEALING HOW CHARACTERS MANIFEST CARL JUNG'S ARCHETYPES IN THE GAME "PERSONA 4"

**Andini Safa Athalia**

English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Surabaya

[andini.19063@mhs.unesa.ac.id](mailto:andini.19063@mhs.unesa.ac.id)

### Abstrak

*Persona 4* adalah sebuah permainan yang dirilis oleh Atlus. Seri ke-empat game ini, berfokus ke sebuah perkumpulan anak SMA yang berusaha menyelidiki kejadian pembunuhan berantai yang terjadi di daerah tempat tinggal mereka. Dalam perjalanannya, setiap karakter menggunakan kekuatan yang berasal dari kepribadian mereka. Kekuatan mereka didapatkan dengan cara menerima sisi gelap dari diri mereka masing-masing. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa setiap karakter memproyeksikan sisi gelap mereka menjadi satu kesadaran yang terpisah dari diri mereka masing-masing. Namun pada akhirnya setiap karakter utama di permainan ini menerima sisi gelap mereka sebagai bagian dari kepribadian mereka dan mereka juga dapat menyatukan alam kesadaran dan bawah sadar mereka sehingga dapat menemukan jati diri mereka masing-masing.

**Kata Kunci:** *Persona 4*, Alam Bawah Sadar dan Kesadaran, Permainan Video, Psikoanalisis

### Abstract

*Persona 4* is a game released by Atlus. This fourth installment of the game focuses on a group of highschoolers pursuing a serial killer running around their neighborhood. During the journey, the group use their powers that come from their personas. Each of these characters gained their powers by accepting the dark side of their personalities. The results of this research found that these characters projects their dark side into a shadow version of themselves and some even creates a replica of their dark side. Eventually, these characters then accepted their dark side as a part of them and therefore were able to make a union between their conscious and unconscious realm in which they can find their true selves.

**Keywords:** *Persona 4*, Conscious and unconscious realms, Video Games, Psychoanalysis

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Persona 4* is a game released by Atlus. This fourth installment of the game focuses on a group of highschoolers pursuing a serial killer running around their neighborhood. During the journey, the group use their powers that come from their personas. Each of these characters gained their powers by accepting the dark side of their personalities. *Persona 4* offers a wide range of characters. And in this research the characters analyzed will be; Yu Narukami, Yosuke Hanamura, Chie Satonaka, Yukiko Amagi, Kanji Tatsumi, Rise Kujikawa, Teddie and Naoto Shirogane. The *Persona* series itself is inspired by Carl Jung's theory of the archetypes. Each of these characters archetypes also influences their journey discovering their powers. In the game, the journey of discovering their powers is represented by their own 'castles' and their shadow self which are part of the archetypes.

Archetypes are the structure that constructs our psyche. There are the persona, shadow, and anima/animus. The persona itself is a mask that conceals our true self. According to Carl Jung, *Persona* contradicts our real self or the dark side of our personality or the shadow. (Jung, 1979) The shadow or the dark side of our personality, is an important role in balancing our psyche. Therefore, it must consist of a considerable moral effort recognizing the dark aspects of one's personality. (Jung, 1979) Those who do not recognize their shadows, project them to others. Therefore, a person must balance their persona and their shadow to discover themselves. (Jung, 1979) Then there's the anima/animus. According to Jung, the anima are feminine traits that is present in a male's psyche. While animus are masculine traits that is present in a female's psyche. (Jung, 1979) Anima in men, tends to manifest as the desire to be nurtured by a mother, giving male the opportunity to be a caring figure, while the Animus in women, tends to manifest as the principle of rationality,

giving them the capability to raise assertiveness and deliberation. (Jung, 1979)

There is previous research that has dived into the implementation of Carl Jung's implementation in the Persona series. The research finds that the implementation of Carl Jung's theory manifests in their personas which derived from various mythology. The research also focuses on the game mechanics of two games from the Persona series. (Utama, 2018) Therefore, this research will focus on Persona 4 and its characters. There are three research question in this research; How do Carl Jung's archetypes reflect in the game? How do each characters' archetypes affect their journey in their self-discovery? How can we apply them to the real world? Based on the research questions above, the purpose of this research is to dive deep into each characters' archetypes and find how their archetypes manifest in their journey of self-discovery.

## 2. METHOD

In this research, data was collected by replaying the game and gathering various dialogues or instances related to the four main archetypes according to Jung, namely the Shadow, Persona, Anima/Animus, and Self. This method, known as "close playing," allows the researcher to learn more about how these archetypes are implemented in the game.

In addition, data was also collected through in-depth analysis of the characters' journeys in finding themselves and gaining self-power. This involves understanding how characters utilize these archetypes in overcoming challenges and achieving their goals.

During the data collection process, important notes and findings were categorized and recorded carefully. After that, the data was processed and analyzed using Jung's theories as a reference. The results of the analysis were then used to answer the hypothesis and conclude how Jung's archetypes influence game design and narrative.

Moreover, in analyzing the data, the researcher also considered qualitative research principles, such as considering context, taking into account subjective experiences, and analyzing data holistically. This is done to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the research findings.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Psychoanalysis

According to Jung, the psyche is a complete personality of an individual including feelings, thoughts, and behavior. (Jung, 1979) There are several components which combines and construct our personality which are the conscious and the unconscious. (Jung, 1979)

### 2. Consciousness

Consciousness is a realm of personal awareness where one identifies themselves explicitly and knowingly. (Jung, 1979) The core of the conscious is the ego, which basically acts as a navigation device that shows the route of one's journey that we see and realize exists. This route and the turns we take is what shapes our persona.

### 3. Personal Unconscious

The personal unconscious is the contrast of the consciousness, when the ego hides and represses the undesirable aspects of the psyche. (Jung, Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 8: Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche, 1969) The personal unconscious is hidden beneath the normal awareness and actively interacting with the consciousness back and forth.

### 4. Collective Unconscious

Differs from the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious is the deepest part of one's unconscious mind. It is genetically inherited and goes back to previous generations. The chain of inheritance forms one's collective unconscious with similar patterns such as myths, symbols and themes. (Jung, Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 8: Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche, 1969)

### 5. Archetypes

Through the chain of inheritance, the archetypes are found. According to Jung, archetypes are manifestations of one's role or the model image of the person. (Jung, Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self (Collected Works of C.G. Jung Vol.9 Part 2), 1979) This research will be focusing on the three of four major Jungian archetypes which are;

- Self, it is superior in rank to the ego and is the unified of the conscious and unconscious realm.
- Persona, is the mask that conceals our real-self. Or mask that we show to others.
- Shadow, is the dark side of our personality hidden beneath the persona.

#### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through a deep analysis, this research finds that there are different manifestations of the three archetypes. The first is from the protagonist, Yu Narukami, as he is the embodiment of the 'self' archetype. There are also representations of the collective unconscious through the "Midnight Channel" in the game and also the presence of various archetypal figures.

##### *1. The Embodiment of the 'Self'*

In the game *Persona 4*, "self" is represented by Yu Narukami, the game's protagonist. Yu has the ability to form and balance social relationships with other characters, which are referred to as "social links." These social links demonstrate Yu's ability to form close relationships with other characters, which is a characteristic of a balanced and adaptable individual. In psychology, according to Carl Jung, "self" is a higher level of "ego," where "ego" is only a part of a larger personality. "Self" encompasses the entire personality, including parts that are not accessible or understood by "ego." Therefore, the development and understanding of "self" is the main goal in Jungian psychology therapy psychology (Jung C., *Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self* (Collected Works of C.G. Jung Vol.9 Part 2), 1979).

Jung believes that every individual has a unique and distinct "self," which is the core of their identity. Furthermore, "self" is also a source of creativity, intuition, and vision. Therefore, recognizing and understanding "self" can help individuals develop their personality and improve their mental well-being. Jung also teaches that developing "self" is not an easy process and requires sufficient time. However, by regularly introspecting and reflecting, and taking steps to understand oneself deeper, individuals can reconnect with "self" and achieve their ideal goals by developing and balancing their social relationships.

Persona Yu, as played by the player, can be interpreted as a manifestation of the player's own archetypal self. This is different from other characters in the game, who often struggle to overcome their inner selves and have repressed desires and emotions. Yu, on the other hand, seems more self-aware and emotionally balanced.



Figure 1, Izanagi.



Figure 2, Izanagi-no-okami

In the story of *Persona 4*, Yu does not have any significant trauma or issues that need to be addressed in order to fully reconcile with his Shadow. This suggests that he has already made peace with his darker side before the events of the game. Furthermore, Izanagi, Yu's main Persona, is a strong and versatile Persona that can learn a wide range of skills. This reflects Yu's ability to adapt and cope in various situations.

The appearance of Izanagi is also noteworthy, as it resembles the image of a samurai or warrior. This further strengthens its connection to the warrior archetype, which is often a part of RPG stories. This archetype can represent courage, success, or a desire to protect others. Moreover, Izanagi has a significant meaning in Japanese mythology. In this mythology, Izanagi and Izanami are the first couple who formed the islands of Japan. Izanagi can be interpreted as a husband or leader, which is fitting for Yu's strength and leadership in the game.

Upon losing against the final boss, Yu gains the power to summon a more perfect version of his Persona, Izanagi-no-Okami, a representation of his ideal self. Through the words of his friends, Yu is able to integrate them into his personality and become more authentic and genuine in his relationships with others. This is represented by Yu gaining a more perfect version of his persona. This transformation is reflected in his ability to fuse more powerful Personas and gain access to the game's true ending.



Figure 3, Yu losing against the final boss.



Figure 4, Yu gains encouragement from his friends.

Overall, Yu's embodiment of the self archetype in Persona 4 represents the idea of finding balance and harmony within oneself, as well as the importance of personal growth and development in building meaningful relationships with others.

## 1. 2. Persona & Shadows

The shadow represents the repressed and unconscious aspects of an individual's personality. Each of the main characters in Persona 4 has a shadow self that represents their hidden desires, fears, and flaws. The shadow is often revealed and confronted through battles in the game's dungeons. As Jung stated, the shadow is the dark side of one's personality which often is rejected (Jung C., *Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 8: Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche*, 1969)

When one develops a psychological projection, which is a defense mechanism against one's shadow while attributing them to others, will eventually create an illusionary environment. This correlates with the "dungeons" in the game which is an environment that represents the characters hidden desires. Some examples can be seen in;

Yukiko Amagi's shadow represents her desire to break free from her traditional family expectations and run away from her responsibilities at the family inn. In turn, Yukiko depicts herself as a princess waiting for her prince charming to free her from her hometown.

In the character of Yukiko Amagi, her Shadow represents her desire to give up on traditional family expectations and run away from her responsibilities at the inn of her family. However, Yukiko portrays it as if she is a princess waiting for her prince charming to rescue her from the village. This shows that Yukiko has a Shadow that hides her true desires.

In the opinion of Carl Gustav Jung, Shadow is a part of one's personality that must be accepted and integrated with oneself. Moreover, Shadow can also become a source of creativity and innovation if handled well. Therefore, in the game Persona 4, main characters must undergo a journey to face and integrate their Shadows.



Figure 5, Yukiko's dungeon

Kanji Tatsumi's shadow represents his fear of being rejected by society for his perceived feminine interests. His dungeon is a Japanese bath house representing his interest in men's masculinity.



Figure 6, Kanji's dungeon.

Naoto Shirogane's shadow represents her fear of not being taken seriously as a detective because of her gender and youthful appearance. Her dungeon is in the form of a lab due to her desires to change her appearance.



Figure 7, Naoto's dungeon.

Rise Kujikawa's shadow represents her fear of losing her identity as a famous idol and being forgotten by her fans. Her dungeon is a strip club which is the result of her persona she showed as an idol to her fans.





Figure 8, Rise's dungeon.

Other characters who did not undergo a psychological projection, only faces their shadows as it is. They ended up making peace with the shadow as they process to accept it as a part of themselves. Some examples are;

- a. Chie Satonaka's shadow represents her fear of losing her martial arts skills and her sense of identity.



Figure 9-10, Chie confronting her shadow

- b. Yosuke Hanamura's shadow represents his fear of being stuck in his small town and not being able to escape to the big city.



Figure 11, Yosuke confronting his shadow.

Teddie's shadow represents his fear of losing his identity and becoming a monster.



Figure 12-13, Teddie confronting his shadow.

In the context of this game, the term "Persona" can be interpreted as the part of ourselves that is presented to the outside world. It is the "face" or "social identity" that we create to adhere to social norms and expectations, and to be loved and evaluated by others. This is very similar to Jung's thinking about Persona, which he saw as a "mask" or "facade" that individuals build to present to the outside world.

In Jungian psychology, Persona is a component of the individual's structure, which includes the ego, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious. The ego is the part of ourselves that interacts with the outside world and takes on social roles. Personal unconscious, on the other hand, contains short-term memories and the flow of thoughts towards recent events. The collective unconscious, which is the deepest part, contains universal archetypes that are caused by the basic structure of our brain.

Jung states that Persona is an adaptation of the ego that aims to ensure that the individual can live in society. However, Persona can also become an obstacle in the individual's life experience, as the individual may be too attached to the former social identity and lose contact with their inner self and repressed desires. Therefore, in line with the game, Persona can be considered a strength obtained from the 'inner self', but it can also become a threat if not controlled well. (Jung C. , Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 8: Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche, 1969)

Each character's Persona is unique to them and reflects their personality, desires, and struggles. In the game, the characters explore the relationship between their Persona and their true selves, and the importance of accepting and integrating their shadow selves to achieve

personal growth and self-actualization. Some examples are;

- a. For Yukiko, her persona is a fiery bird called Konohana Sakuya, which represents her true passion and inner strength.
- b. Chie's persona is the tomboyish martial artist, Tomoe, who represents her true warrior spirit.
- c. For Yu, his persona is Izanagi, a powerful warrior god from Japanese mythology.
- d. Yosuke's persona is Jiraiya, a charismatic and playful ninja who represents his ability to adapt and change.
- e. Teddie's persona is a childlike hero who represents his pure heart and innocence, Kintoki-Douji.
- f. For Kanji, His persona is Take-Mikazuchi, a muscular and powerful god who represents his true masculine strength.
- g. Naoto's persona is Sukuna-Hikona, a wise and mysterious hermit who represents her true intelligence and wisdom.
- h. Rise's persona is Himiko, a regal and powerful queen who represents her true leadership and charisma.

As stated above, the persona is needed in order to conform to social norms and expectations, and to be accepted and valued by others. Although, in the end of the game, as each character navigates through their journey and hardships in order to find their real selves, they will gain another version of their "ultimate" persona which represents their acceptance of their dark side.



Figure 14, Yosuke's ultimate



Figure 15, Chie's ultimate persona, Susano-o.  
persona, Suzuka Gongen.

### 3. Collective Unconscious and Archetypal Figures

Carl Jung's collective unconscious is a term he used to describe the shared, inherited reservoir of human experiences, instincts, and archetypes that are present in the unconscious mind of all people. According to Jung, the collective unconscious is not personal but instead represents the psyche of humanity as a whole, containing universal themes and symbols that are present in all cultures and societies (Jung C. , *Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, Volume 8: *Structure & Dynamics of the Psyche*, 1969) Jung believed that the collective unconscious is responsible for the manifestation of archetypes, which are universal symbolic images or patterns that represent deep-seated human experiences, emotions, and instincts. These archetypes are found across cultures and time periods and are expressed in art, religion, mythology, and other cultural expressions.

Jung argued that the collective unconscious is separate from the personal unconscious, which contains repressed or forgotten experiences and memories that are unique to everyone. The collective unconscious is said to be deeper and more fundamental than the personal unconscious and is thought to be the source of creativity, intuition, and spiritual experiences.

In relation to Persona 4, the "Midnight Channel" can be seen as a representation of the collective unconscious, as it reflects the fears, desires, and emotions of the characters and the society they live in. The Shadows that appear in the Midnight



Figure 5 Chie, Yosuke and Yu entering the Midnight Channel

Channel can be seen as manifestations of the collective unconscious, representing the repressed or forgotten aspects of the characters' personalities and the societal pressures and expectations that they face. The characters' Personas, on the other hand, can be seen as representations of the integration of the collective unconscious and personal unconscious, as they are formed through the characters' acceptance and integration of their Shadow selves. This can be proven by how "Midnight Channel" is a phenomenon that is experienced by multiple characters in the game, and is said to be fueled by the collective desires and emotions of the town's residents.

Another example is how the protagonist can navigate through the “Midnight Channel” and freely interact with the shadows. This can be seen as a representation of the role of the conscious mind in navigating the contents of the collective unconscious.

There are also the presence of various archetypal figures, such as the Trickster (represented by the character Teddie), the Mother (represented by Rise Kujikawa), the Maiden (represented by Yukiko Amagi), and the Sage (represented by Naoto Shirogane). These archetypal are believed to be universal patterns that reflect deep-seated human experiences and emotions, and they are present in the collective unconscious. Another example on universal pattern can be seen in the personas itself, as it is based on mythological and cultural figures, reflecting the universal nature of the collective unconscious.

## 5. CONCLUSION

From the data and explanation above, Persona 4 can be seen as an embodiment of Carl Jung's theories of the collective unconscious, archetypes, and the concept of self-realization. The characters of Persona 4 each represent various archetypal figures that are rooted in the collective unconscious, and their journeys through self-discovery and shadow integration reflect Jung's theories on personal and collective unconscious. The Midnight Channel in the game also reflects the idea of the collective unconscious, where it represents the darker, repressed aspects of the psyche that are projected onto the world.

In Jungian psychology, Persona is a component of the individual's structure, which includes the ego, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious. The ego is the part of ourselves that interacts with the outside world and takes on social roles. Personal unconscious, on the other hand, contains short-term memories and the flow of thoughts towards recent events. The collective unconscious, which is the deepest part, contains universal archetypes that are caused by the basic structure of our brain.

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Aside from Yu who does not have any significant trauma or issues that need to be addressed in order to fully reconcile with his Shadow. This suggests that he has already made peace with his darker side before the events of the game. Furthermore, Izanagi, Yu's main Persona, is a strong and versatile Persona that can learn a wide range of skills. This reflects Yu's ability to adapt and cope in various situations.

Overall, Persona 4 can be viewed as a modern interpretation of Jung's psychoanalytic theories, exploring the depths of the human psyche through its characters and themes. It offers a unique and engaging way to understand and explore these complex psychological concepts, making them accessible and relatable to players of all backgrounds. to balance with our persona and create our true selves. And in context of Persona 4, we are not alone. The journey to finding one's true self can be helped with the bonds you have made.

*“It's not what you have or what you can do... Just being born, living your life.... before you know it, you are already special to someone.” -Yosuke Hanamura*

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